

Message

---

**From:** Fleming, Megan [Fleming.Megan@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 5/16/2016 9:36:19 PM  
**To:** McQueen, Jacqueline [McQueen.Jacqueline@epa.gov]; Cuje, Jace [Cuje.Jace@epa.gov]; Cybulski, Walter [Cybulski.Walter@epa.gov]; Flowers, Lynn [Flowers.Lynn@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Monday news round up

Hi all,

Here are a few of the relevant stories from today.

Thanks,  
Megan

### Solvent Harms Kidney Function, Draft EPA Assessment Finds

A widely used solvent that until recently also was a common fuel additive can harm kidney function, according to a draft toxicological assessment of the chemical, *tert*-butyl alcohol, the Environmental Protection Agency released today.

The EPA's draft analysis also concluded there is suggestive evidence *tert*-butyl alcohol may cause cancer in people. The BASF Corp., Evonik Degussa Corp. and Huntsman Corp. were among the companies that produced 4.1 billion gallons of *tert*-butyl alcohol in 2011, according to information manufacturers provided the agency in 2012. Interested parties may join agency and other scientists June 29-30 at a Public Science Meeting the agency will hold to discuss the *tert*-butyl Alcohol and benzo[a]pyrene assessments.

### UN Agencies: Glyphosate 'Unlikely' to Cause Cancer

A pair of United Nations agencies said the widely used herbicide glyphosate and two insecticides—diazinon and malathion—are unlikely to pose carcinogenic risk to human beings when exposed to the body in dietary form. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization issued their findings today in a joint report following a weeklong meeting in Geneva.

The findings are noteworthy as they run counter to a 2015 report by WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer that classified glyphosate, diazinon and malathion as "probably carcinogenic to humans." The latest conclusions were based upon an analysis of a "large number" of genotoxicity studies conducted over the past five years that measured the chemicals' effects on living mammals—primarily mice and rats, but also humans.

### EPA Issues Direct Final New Use Rules for 55 Chemicals

The Environmental Protection Agency is set to publish on May 16 direct final significant new use rules for 55 chemicals.

The EPA has allowed the 55 chemicals to go into production, with protective measures outlined either in consent orders their manufacturers agreed to follow or in premanufacture notices (PMN) the original manufacturers submitted to the agency.

The significant new use rules, or SNURs, would adopt those conditions so they apply to other manufacturers that want to make the same chemicals.

### Pesticides on Seeds Lawsuit to Move Forward

A federal judge refused to dismiss a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency over its regulation of seeds coated in pesticides.

The EPA argued that its 2013 determination that seeds coated with pesticides should be exempt from regulation cannot be challenged in court. But William Alsup, a U.S. District Court judge in Northern California, disagreed and issued a May 13 ruling that the lawsuit from several environmental and conservation groups can move forward. Seeds for soy, corn and many other crops are often coated prior to planting in pesticides, particularly the controversial insecticides known as neonicotinoids. However, in some instances the chemical can rub off during planting and create clouds of dust that can harm wildlife. The plaintiffs in the lawsuit are arguing that the EPA should regulate these coated seeds the same way it regulates the spraying of a pesticide.

## **TSCA Amendments Should Limit Animal Testing, 39 Democrats Say**

Dozens of House Democrats ask that language to reduce animal testing be included in legislation the House and Senate are negotiating to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act. A group of 39 Democrats writes to Rep. Pallone asking him to support the Senate-approved legislative language designed to reduce the use of animal-based toxicity tests in chemical safety assessments.

## **Markey Seeks Answers on GMO Mosquitoes**

Sen. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) is asking questions about the safety of an upcoming field test of genetically modified mosquitoes designed to prevent transmission of the Zika virus. Markey, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, sent a May 13 [letter](#) to the heads of the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency asking about the precautions they have taken to prevent any unintended consequences from the release of the GMO insects, which have been engineered to produce non-viable offspring, thus reducing overall mosquito populations. Markey asked about reports that early deployments of these mosquitoes in Latin America have not led to expected reductions in Zika transmission and also about the possibility that the mosquitoes' altered DNA could inadvertently transfer to other animals or even to humans. Earlier this year, the FDA released a [draft environmental impact statement](#) that found the release of the GMO insects, which would take place on an island in the Florida Keys, would not have a significant ecological effect. If the agency finalizes the environmental impact statement, the field test would be free to move forward.

## **EPA's NCEA Director Olden To Retire In July**

Ken Olden, the director of EPA's National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA), will retire at the end of July, agency sources say.

Olden, who has headed NCEA since 2012, has sought to implement reforms to the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) program, including attempts to make the program more transparent and to respond to recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS).

Megan Fleming  
Office of Science Policy  
U.S. EPA Office of Research and Development  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460  
(202)-564-6604